

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-04 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00

DODE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 PA-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SAJ-01

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P R 101123Z SEP 76

FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5713

AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUESSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION BERLIN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PIN SPD TROUBLES IN HESSE

REF : A. FRANKFURT 7155, B. FRANKFURT 6213, C. FRANKFURT 2126

1. WITH THE BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS 48 HOURS AWAY, THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS IN HESSE ARE IN CONSIDERABLE DISARRAY REGARDING THE FUTURE OF THEIR CHAIRMAN AND HESSE'S MINISTER-PRESIDENT ALBERT OSSWALD.

2. CAPITALIZING ON ALLEGATIONS OF SCANDAL AND CORRUPTION (REF A) AND AS YET ANOTHER MEANS TO EXPLOIT THESE TO ADVANTAGE FOR SUNDAY'S GENERAL ELECTION, THE CDU IN WIESBADEN HAS BROUGHT IN A MOTION OF NO-CONFIDENCE IN OSSWALD, WHICH IS TO BE CONSIDERED BY A SPECIAL LANDTAG SESSION ON WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 6. FOR ITS PART THE SPD IS ATTEMPTING TO DEVELOP A SCENARIO FOR DEALING WITH THE SITUATION BUT FINAL DECISION WILL BE MADE ONLY AFTER THE RESULTS OF SUNDAY'S BUNDESTAG

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ELECTIONS ARE KNOWN. MOREOVER, IT IS BY NO MEANS CERTAIN

THAT ALL THE PRINCIPAL ACTORS ON THE SPD SIDE, I.E., THE NATIONAL LEADERSHIP, THE LOCAL LEADERS, PRIMARILY ARNDT AND BOERNER, AND FINALLY OSSWALD HIMSELF, HAVE YET AGREED ON JUST WHAT SHOULD BE DONE. THE MOST WIDELY HELD BELIEF IS THAT SHORTLY AFTER THE ELECTION RESULTS ARE KNOWN, PERHAPS ON MONDAY, OSSWALD WILL ANNOUNCE HIS RESIGNATION, EITHER EFFECTIVE AT THE END OF OCTOBER, WHICH WOULD COINCIDE WITH THE END OF HIS TERM AS PRESIDENT OF THE BUNDESRAT, OR EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY BUT WITH BOTH OSSWALD AND HIS CABINET REMAINING AS CARETAKER GOVERNMENT UNTIL A NEW MINISTER-PRESIDENT IS ELECTED BY THE LANDTAG VOTING IN SECRET BALLOT (SEE REF C). EITHER SOLUTION WOULD ENABLE THE SPD AND FDP DELEGATIONS IN WIESBADEN TO VOTE IN GOOD CONSCIENCE AGAINST THE CDU'S NO-CONFIDENCE MOTION ON OCTOBER 6 OR PERHAPS AVOID THE PROBLEM ALL TOGETHER BY FINDING A PRETEXT FOR NOT ATTENDING THE SESSION. SPECULATION ON A POSSIBLE SUCCESSOR TO OSSWALD NOW CENTERS ON FEDERAL MINISTER OF RESEARCH AND TECHNOLOGY HANS MATTHOEFER, NORTH HESSE SPD CHAIRMAN HOLGER BOERNER, AND ARMIN CLAUSS, LEADER OF THE SPD DELEGATION IN THE LANDTAG.

3. AS TO THE EFFECT OF ALL THIS ON THE PROSPECTS OF THE OCTOBER 3 BUNDESTAG ELECTIONS, IT IS SAFE TO SAY THAT IT HAS HURT THE SPD AND HELPED THE CDU, BUT IT IS VERY RISKY TO GO FARTHER. OUR PROGNOSIS REMAINS ESSENTIALLY THAT REPORTED IN REF B, ADDING ONLY THAT IT IS DISTINCTLY POSSIBLE THAT THE CDU WILL BECOME HESSE'S LARGEST PARTY IN TERMS OF BUNDESTAG REPRESENTATION AS IT NOW IS IN THE STATE'S LANDTAG.LEHMANN

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